

ARIZONA ♦ CALIFORNIA ♦ NEW YORK ♦ NORTH DAKOTA ♦ TEXAS

September 20, 2006

The Honorable Ted Stevens
Chairman, Subcommittee on Defense
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable C.W. Bill Young
Chairman, Subcommittee on Defense
Committee on Appropriations
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Daniel K. Inouye
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Defense
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable John P. Murtha
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Defense
Committee on Appropriations
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairmen and Ranking Members,

As you prepare the conference report on the FY 2007 defense appropriations bill, we urge you to restore funding for the Predator UAV (Unmanned Aerial Vehicle) program to the level proposed in the President's budget request. We write this letter not only because our Air National Guards will be the next units to receive the Predator mission, but because the Predator is one of the most vital tools used by our armed forces in the fight against terrorism.

Earlier this year, the Air Force announced its plans to expand its Predator UAV program. Air National Guard units in Arizona, California, New York, North Dakota, and Texas were identified as the first to receive this new mission. The 163rd Air National Guard Wing was also identified to provide training for operating and maintaining the system. Some Air National Guard units are currently training in preparation for receiving the Predator system in the next fiscal year. However, if funding is not restored for this critical mission in the conference report, then the Predator systems for the Air National Guard will be delayed by one to two years.

Our Air National Guard units stand ready to serve our country by performing this essential mission. We ask you to support the brave men and women in our Air National Guard by restoring \$76.7 million for the Predator UAV program.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



Arnold Schwarzenegger
Governor of California



George E. Pataki
Governor of New York



Janet Napolitano
Governor of Arizona



John Hoeven
Governor of North Dakota



Rick Perry
Governor of Texas